

PRESIDENT: Senator Koch. Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. President, I wasn't on for a moment and I thought it was malfunctioning. The intent of the return of 212 to Select File is to bring about, I believe, a better way in which we attempt to manage and determine that minimum standards for jails are indeed being met by the state and the purpose of this amendment is to establish the Jail Standards Board and that purpose primarily is to serve as advisory to the Commission which we established and the Chairman of that Jail Standards Board shall be the administrator appointed by the Governor. If you will recall, when we were discussing this bill on the floor, there were several of us who had some concerns about the fact that possibly the commission which we were establishing was rather provincial and parochial in terms of its purview and its responsibilities. What we are asking here is that the Jail Standards Board would be primarily the agency responsible for examining minimal standards as they pertain to the jails of this state and it would become, more or less, the observer to insure that the intent of this bill is being met. Now I know there are some of you on the floor who have some very strong concerns to the fact that this should be left in the hands of those most directly concerned with that, but if we really want the bill to have meaning, then I think that we should put it with that Jail Standards Board primarily with an advisor appointed by the Governor. There would be no additional cost for this type of arrangement because the money has been appropriated and we merely make mention of that, if you recall, on page 1311, where "Appropriations to the Department of Correctional Services for study and review of jail standards shall lapse as of the effective date of this act and shall be returned to the General Fund from which fund an amount equal to the lapsed funds is hereby appropriated to the Department of Jail Standards." So the fiscal impact is neutralized in this regard. I have been concerned, as I said before, when we established this piece of legislation that we have watered it down to the point where it has very little value. I would hope that this body would reconsider this action and allow us to return 212 to Select File for the purpose of this amendment.

PRESIDENT: Senator Kremer.

SENATOR KREMER: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, of course, I oppose this proposed amendment and bringing the bill back. Senator Koch, this bill has been before this body for two years. It has been widely supported by the counties, by the sheriffs and those that have the responsibility of providing good standards for our jails on the local level. Now we are dealing with an issue here that should be addressed by those that have authority on the local level. A number of us have worked hard on this bill and I can't understand why at this late hour that you come now and offer this proposal. I cannot understand it. Never once have you come to those of us who have been on the bill and discussed this issue and I think I know where it comes from. I feel so strongly that this needs to be at the county level. We have the board put together now that is made up of not only of county officials, a sheriff, a judge. This will work and I am greatly opposed to bringing this bill back after the work that has gone